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THE HISPANIC MINISTRY  
OF THE  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
IN THE  
METROPOLITAN AREA OF NEW YORK AND ENVIRONS

A study undertaken  
for the  
Trinity Grants Board, New York, NY  
by  
Dr. Justo L. Gonzalez



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## PREFACE

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Justo L. Gonzalez

Decatur, Georgia  
On Martin Luther King's  
Birthday, 1985





# I

## THE NATURE OF THE CHALLENGE

As this consultant has spoken with bishops, pastors and laity in the greater metropolitan area of New York, it has become clear to him that the nature of the Hispanic challenge to the Episcopal church is variously perceived by leaders and policy-makers in the church. Indeed, the Hispanic challenge to the Episcopal Church - or to any other church - has two main foci, and will be understood in different ways according to one's concentration on and concern for one of these two foci: the "challenge of numbers", and the "challenge of the poor".

### The Challenge of Numbers

It is a well-known fact that the number of Hispanics in the United States is growing rapidly. According to the Census Bureau, in 1970 there were some nine to twelve million Hispanics in the nation, and by 1980 their number had increased to almost fifteen million. But such figures are generally acknowledged to be too low by several million, due to a combination of two factors: the traditional undercounting of minorities by census takers, and the natural reluctance on the part of undocumented aliens to let the government know of their existence. In 1980, the State and City of New York, together with other plaintiffs, filed suit against the United States Bureau of the Census, claiming that it had undercounted the population of New York (both the state and the city). A preliminary court order that the Bureau correct its figures has been delayed in litigation, and therefore the data employed in this study are subject to change. But if such changes do occur, they will show the number of Hispanics in greater New York to be even larger than originally reported. Furthermore, even without such court-ordered corrections, it seems safe to surmise that if the trend between 1970 and 1980 has continued in the four years since the last census, the number of Hispanics in New York City has increased by another 100,000. In short, if the data employed in this study are in error - and the error is probably quite large - it is in the direction of undercounting of Hispanics, rather than the opposite.

According to the 1980 census, the Hispanic population of New York City is 1,406,026, distributed as follows among the five boroughs:

Bronx	396,353
Brooklyn	392,118
Manhattan	336,247
Queens	262,422
Staten Island	18,884

This represents an increase of 10% in the ten years since the 1970 census. That increase has been concentrated mostly in Queens, where the Hispanic population has grown by 70.4% (from 153,691 to 262,422). In the Bronx and Brooklyn, the 1980 census reports a decrease in Hispanic population. But such decrease is minor (2.7% for the Bronx, and 0.1% for Brooklyn), and will probably be more than erased if the Bureau of the Census corrects its figures as requested by the State and City of New York. But even on the basis of the 1980 census figures, Hispanics comprise 19.9% of the entire population of the City of New York. Thus, even if the census is correct, one out of every five New Yorkers is Hispanic.

It is also important to note that this phenomenon is not limited to the City of New York. Indeed, the census of 1980 shows very few tracts within a commuting radius of New York where the Hispanic population has not increased. This includes most of northern New Jersey, Connecticut as far as New Haven, and western Long Island. In New Jersey, for instance, the Puerto Rican population increased by 106,603 in the period between 1970 and 1980. At present, Hispanics in New Jersey probably account for between 12 and 15% of the total population. In the diocese of Newark, there are, again according to the census, 326,707 Hispanics, out of a total population of 3,329,642. This is approximately 9.8% of the total population. On Long Island, 756,515 persons out of a total of 6,728,074 (11.2%). In Connecticut, 326,707 out of 3,107,576 (10.6%). And, once again, all these figures are based on the official government count, which may be far below reality.

Roughly two-thirds (61.2%) of the Hispanic population of New York is Puerto Rican. In this case, it is likely that the percentage drawn from the census figures may have to be scaled down, since it is to be expected that the undercounting of Hispanics was greater among undocumented aliens than among Puerto Ricans. The following figures indicate the percentage of Hispanics who are Puerto Ricans - or of Puerto Rican descent - in each of the five boroughs:

Bronx	80.1%
Brooklyn	71.3%
Manhattan	49.5%
Queens	31.7%
Staten Island	34.2%

It is also significant to note that, although the number of Puerto Ricans in New York City has increased, the number of other Hispanics has increased at a faster rate. Therefore, according to the census of 1970 Puerto Ricans were 66.2% of all Hispanics, and according to 1980 figures they are 61.2%. This slack has not been taken up by any particular group, and thus it is clear that the Hispanic population of New York is becoming increasingly diverse.



The diversity of that population is reported by the census of 1980 as follows:

Puerto Rican	852,833
Cuban	63,189
Mexican	23,761
Other	466,606

But again it is important to note that were all undocumented aliens to be included, the last two categories would probably increase significantly. Also, of these various categories, it is likely that in the next census the Cubans will show the smallest increase (unless the present negotiations between the U.S. and Cuban governments result in another wave of immigration). It is also to be expected that the number of Puerto Ricans will continue growing. Indeed, the net passenger traffic between Puerto Rico and the Mainland, which showed a trend to return to Puerto Rico in the early 70's, has again reversed itself during the last years, indicating a renewed trend of migration from Puerto Rico to the Mainland. Also, as long as the economic disparity between Mexico and the United States exists, and as long as the turmoil in Central America continues, it is likely that the Mexican and Central American population of the entire nation will increase, and that greater New York will see its share of that growth.

As we look at all these figures, one thing is certain: unless the Episcopal Church is willing to write off more than one-fifth of the entire population of New York - and four-fifths of some parishes - it must respond to the Hispanic challenge. And what is now the challenge of one-fifth of the population may well be the challenge of one-third of the population before the present century runs out.

This challenge is all the more important since the vast majority of Hispanics in the area of greater New York are unchurched. Studies indicate that while the vast majority of Hispanics in New York call themselves Roman Catholic, few of them have any relationship with the Church beyond being baptized, and perhaps married and buried by it. Although reports vary, some claim that less than 10% of all Hispanics in the city attend the Catholic Church regularly, and the most optimistic reports are that approximately 25% attend church once a year.

The reasons for this are to be found in the historical background of the countries from which most Hispanics in New York come. Although the Spanish colonial enterprise was conceived from the very beginning as a religious and missionary endeavor, and although many of the regular priests and nuns who came to the New World had a profound sense of mission, the nature of the Church as a whole soon changed. The regulars worked mostly among the poorer Indians, in areas at the very edge of Spanish power. As parishes were established, the "best" of them

were usually turned over to the diocesan clergy. Many of these had come to the New World, not out of missionary zeal, but for other reasons. Furthermore, since the Spanish crown had been granted the rights and duties of the "Patronato Real" - Royal Patronage - over the Church in all its colonies, the crown practically appointed all bishops and other members of the hierarchy. As a result, the hierarchy, and many of the secular clergy below it, became functionaries of the crown rather than servants of the people. Thus, from very early there began to appear in the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America the tension that has become so visible in the last decades, between the church of the powerful and the church of the powerless.

This division was also visible at the time of independence, when most of the hierarchy took a firm stance in support of Spain, while many of the lower clergy took the opposite stance. As a result, the struggle for independence also took on anti-hierarchical overtones. When independence finally was achieved, most governments in Spanish America claimed that, as heirs to all the rights of the crown, they now had the right of "National Patronage" over the church. Since this included the right to nominate the bishops to be appointed to the new nations, and the Pope - who in any case took a long time to recognize the independence of the new nations - would not agree to it, several new nations were left without a hierarchy, and with decreasing number of priests, for decades.

This lack of adequate pastoral services has persisted until the twentieth century. In Puerto Rico, according to statistics of the mid-sixties, there was a priest for every 5,625 inhabitants. At that time there were on the island 394 priests, of whom 48 were Puerto Rican. The vast majority were from the United States (151) and from Spain (148). In the Dominican Republic, there were 10,100 inhabitants for each priest. But in the rural parishes that figure was 19,395. As to the national origin of priests, the situation was similar to that in Puerto Rico. Every regular priest working in a parish, and one out of three diocesan priests, were foreigners. Similar situations also existed in Central America, where the number of inhabitants per priest was equally high: Guatemala, 12,175; El Salvador, 14,410; Nicaragua, 12,234. In every country in Central America, the majority of the clergy (and almost all the regular clergy) were foreign-born. The one exception was Costa Rica, where almost 80% of the diocesan clergy was native-born.

As one analyzes these and other statistics, it is also clear that the clergy, and therefore the pastoral services of the Church, have been concentrated in the cities and in the wealthier areas of each nation. Thus, as one moves down in the social ladder one finds a larger proportion of unchurched people.



On the other hand, it is important to understand the nature of the religiosity of such people, who are the main source of immigration into the United States in general and into New York in particular. That religiosity is best described by the phrases, often heard in religious conversations in Central America, Mexico, and the Spanish Caribbean, "Soy catolico a mi manera", and "Soy catolico, pero no creo en los curas" - I'm a Catholic in my own fashion; I'm a Catholic, but I don't believe in priests. Such phrases betray the anger and frustration of a people who, while deeply religious, feel that they have been abandoned or ignored by their church. While such feelings are being allayed by the more recent emphasis of the Roman Catholic Church on the "option for the poor", it will take some time before their impact on Latin American religiosity is overcome.

In conclusion, the religious background of most Hispanic Americans in New York, while Roman Catholic, is very different from the Roman Catholicism that one finds among English-speaking whites in the U.S., and it would be a grave error to understand it in terms of our more general experience of Roman Catholicism. For instance, most other Roman Catholic immigrant groups have found in the Church a rallying point, and in their worship and parish life a means to preserve their identity. (As have also found the Eastern Orthodox immigrants in their own ecclesiastical traditions.) But Hispanics in New York do not turn to the Roman Catholic Church as a means of identity or cultural expression. They turn rather to music, food, and celebrations - many of which are religious in nature, but clearly not ecclesiastical in the way they are observed. For Hispanics in New York, the Roman Catholic Church, although in a sense claiming their allegiance, remains a foreign organization, controlled by people of other ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and little concerned for their culture and traditions. In times of crisis, or when asked about their religious allegiance, they will declare that they are Roman Catholic. But such declarations have little to do with everyday life in the barrio or in the household.

Once this is understood, it will be seen that there is legitimacy in the "challenge of numbers" as a reason for the Episcopal Church to consider its ministry to and among Hispanics in New York. In so doing, it will not be proselytizing active members of another communion. On the contrary, it will be giving new life to the somewhat dormant faith of the vast numbers of Hispanics in New York who have no church connection whatsoever. And in so doing it will also be assuring its continued existence and impact in a city that is clearly becoming increasingly Hispanic, and where no institution - ecclesiastical or political - that writes Hispanics off has much of a future.

## The Challenge of the Poor

But there is another reason that is often adduced as the grounds for the ministry of the Episcopal Church among Hispanics in New York. It does not contradict the challenge of numbers, but sees it in a different perspective, and therefore leads to a different understanding of mission. This is the challenge of the poor. Perhaps the most significant theological development of the last two decades has been the rediscovery of the important role which the poor play in Scripture, and in certain strands of tradition. For centuries, we have learned to allegorize or "spiritualize" the meaning of such words as "poor", "bread", and "rich" when found in Scripture. But one of the main contributions of the theology coming out of the Third World - and in particular out of Latin America - is that we must now take such words seriously.

There are two elements in this new theological insight that are of particular significance to us as we consider ministry among Hispanics in New York. These are usually called "God's preferential option for the poor", and "the hermeneutical advantage of the poor".

The first means that God's justice is such that God shows a preference for those for whom human society shows the opposite. Once this has been pointed out in Scripture, it is difficult to ignore it, for it is found at every turn. Such is the message, not only of the prophets who are usually billed as the "radical" part of the Bible, but also of the Law, which insists on the rights of the widow, the orphan and the alien, and which at every turn limits the power of the rich over the poor. It is also true of the Gospels, where Jesus declares that He has come to proclaim "Good news to the poor". And of the Epistles, where we are told that "God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong, God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are".

If it is true that the Gospel is first of all "good news to the poor", and if we take that quite literally, it means that those of us who are not poor are at a disadvantage when it comes to hearing the good news. This notion, which is very contrary to our common thinking, is part of what is meant by the "hermeneutical advantage of the poor". Although in a sense the Gospel is for all, the Pharisees and the rich, inasmuch as they cling to their religious or financial advantage, hear it as bad news. Witness the harsh words of Jesus both to the Pharisees and about the rich. In order to hear the "good news to the poor", those who are not poor must somehow join the poor in their plight, so that they too may see the marvel of the action and promises of God.



What is true in general may also be shown to be true in particular examples. For instance, for generations white-dominated Western theology has seen in Moses the giver of the Law, and his ministry as that of the legislator. But the black tradition has known differently: the great work of Moses is bringing the people out of Egypt. Today most Old Testament scholars agree that the black tradition has been right all along, and that one does not understand the Old Testament properly unless one places the Red Sea - and not Sinai - at its center. And on an island in Lake Managua a group of peasants and fisher-folk show that they have insights into the Gospels that are not to be found in most scholarly commentaries (as shown in the book The Gospel in Solentiname).

What all this means is that when we understand the significance of the poor for the proper understanding of Scripture and of the Christian faith, we must come to the conclusion that a church that does not have the poor in its midst, a church that does not identify with the poor, is at a decided disadvantage.

When this is applied specifically to the situation in the greater New York area, it is clear that Hispanic ministry is a call of the poor. In 1979, the income of Hispanic households in New York City was as follows:

Total number of households	454,044	
\$ 00.00 - \$ 5,000	129,704	28.56%
\$ 5,000 - \$ 7,499	57,115	12.58%
\$ 7,500 - \$ 9,999	46,194	10.17%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	80,844	17.81%
\$15,000 - \$19,999	54,412	11.98%
\$20,000 - \$24,999	36,117	7.95%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	32,939	7.25%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	12,222	2.69%
\$50,000 or more	4,497	.99%

This means that in 1979 51.32% of Hispanic households in New York made less than \$10,000.

If one then looks at these statistics in relation to the poverty level of 1979, the result is as follows:

Families below 75% of poverty level	24.5%
Families below 100% of poverty level	34.5%
Families below 125% of poverty level	42.3%
Families below 150% of poverty level	50.7%
Families below 200% of poverty level	63.3%

This obviously does not take into account the vast numbers of undocumented aliens, not counted by the census, who are working for very low and even sub-minimum wages. In this regard, all estimates are little more than educated guesses. In any case, were it possible to count such undocumented aliens, the statistics would be even worse for two reasons: first, most of the households added to the count would be under the poverty level, and secondly, the addition of uncounted members to households already counted would bring a significant number of them under the poverty level.

Finally, a factor that must be taken into account when seeking to understand the significance of these statistics is that many Hispanics in New York City have dependents in their countries of origin whom they support from their income. It is not rare to find a Puerto Rican or a Central American in New York sending more than half of his or her income to Puerto Rico or to Central America. Indeed, this is the reason why many of them are in New York. Again, statistical studies on this phenomenon are few and sketchy. But there is no doubt that, were one to discount what Hispanics send overseas, the number of families living below the poverty line would increase significantly.

Joining these statistics to those quoted above regarding the lack of ecclesiastical connections of most Hispanics in New York, it is important to point out that it is precisely among the poorest Hispanics that such lack is greater. Again, this can be partially explained by the history of Roman Catholicism in the countries of origin of most Hispanics. For a number of reasons, the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America traditionally concentrated its ministry on the cities, and on the middle and higher classes. Although this is now being corrected in dramatic fashion, those Hispanics in New York City who come from the rural areas and from the lower classes have traditionally had very little connection with the Church, even in their countries of origin. Thus, the unchurched, whose enormous number constitute a challenge to the Episcopal Church in New York, are also the poor whose existence we ignore at our own peril.

For both of these reasons, the "challenge of numbers" and the "challenge of the poor", it is clear that Hispanic ministry must be a high priority for the Episcopal Church in the greater New York area.

This has been often said. What has not been said as often is that from these two challenges issue two different understandings of the mission of the Church among Hispanics, and that both of these, in varying degrees and combinations, are manifest in the present work of the Episcopal Church among Hispanics in New York and the surrounding areas.



## II

### THE NATURE OF THE MISSION

From the two challenges discussed in the previous section, emerge two diverging understandings of ministry among Hispanics, depending on which of those two challenges is seen as paramount.

The reason most commonly adduced for the urgency of Hispanic ministries in metropolitan New York is the growing number of Hispanics in the area. The census statistics, and others, are then cited in order to make the argument that, unless the Episcopal Church awakens to the challenge of such numbers, it will eventually find itself practically absent from large sections of the city. If the Episcopal Church wishes to continue making an impact in the city and its surroundings in New Jersey and Connecticut, it is argued, it must do so by claiming the allegiance of the fastest growing minority in the area and in the nation, the Hispanics.

While this argument is certainly valid, others point to some of the dangers it involves, if it is not balanced with another argument based on the challenge of the poor.

The first danger is that mission may tend to be conceived in essentially ecclesiocentric ways. The reason for mission and ministry then becomes, not so much the needs of Hispanics, nor even the need of the Church to have Hispanics as such within its ranks, but rather the instinct of self-preservation which the Church shares with every other institution. This in turn leads to policies which, while perfectly natural in the case of other institutions, may be self-defeating or self-contradictory in the case of the Church.

One such policy, repeatedly tried in the greater New York area by the Episcopal Church as well as by other denominations, is to see the establishment of a Hispanic congregation as a way to make viable structures that have become burdensome as a result of white flight to the suburbs. When the traditional English-speaking congregation no longer finds it possible to pay for the upkeep of its facilities, it is often thought that the establishment of a Hispanic congregation will solve the problem. The most common plan that then develops, not only among Episcopalians, but also in other denominations, is to inject outside funds for hiring a Hispanic (or a Spanish-speaking) pastor, usually as a vicar or as an associate pastor, with the hope that a Hispanic congregation will arise that will eventually be able to shoulder the financial responsibilities that the white congregation is finding increasingly unbearable.

Even a rapid survey of such efforts, both in the Episcopal Church and elsewhere, will show that they seldom work. The usual explanation is that there were frictions between the Anglo rector and the Hispanic vicar, and/or between the Anglo and the Hispanic congregations. It is clear that such conflicts do in fact appear quite often. Indeed, they are almost built into the situation, and only very able and mature priests and congregations will be able to weather them. And even in such cases, where the outcome seems to be quite positive, the entire enterprise is so delicately balanced that a shift in personnel often destroys it.

The reasons for the difficulties in such an approach, however, go much deeper. What is in fact often taking place when plans are being made for such a Hispanic ministry and congregation is that the needs of the church are made to determine the needs of the people, and the existence of facilities and the need to upkeep them is allowed to determine the nature of the program.

As a result of this procedure, the nascent Hispanic congregation is immediately shaped, both in its composition and in its ministry, by future financial and programatic obligations placed upon it even before its inception. This is true even when an injection of outside funds is promised for a number of years. For instance, if from the moment it begins to gather a Hispanic congregation it is told that in five, ten, or fifteen years it will have to be responsible for the upkeep of facilities it did not choose, and for the salary of personnel whose need has been determined a priori, and that this will require X number of dollars, it will immediately begin shaping its program, not so much by the needs of the community, nor even by its own needs, but rather by the commitments placed upon it by those who planned its existence.

This in turn means that Hispanic congregations become viable only among those Hispanics who in the foreseeable future will be able to carry such a burden, that is, among middle class Hispanics - who, as the statistics quoted in an earlier section show, are a very small portion of the Hispanic community. If, in order to be a church, a congregation has to have and support a predetermined sort of facilities, and to pay a full-time priest, as well as cover other obligations, it is clear that only congregations who are mostly middle class or higher, or very large poor congregations, will ever be able to attain such a stature.

For some denominations, the net result of all this is what amounts to "ecclesiastical redlining". Congregations are established in certain neighborhoods, and not in others, on the basis of how soon they will be able to become self-supporting, and not on the basis of the need of the community for the word and presence of the Gospel.

Although Hispanic ministries have usually not been conceived in such crass terms, it is clear as one looks at the total picture that



many of the so-called more "successful" congregations are such precisely because they are composed of people whose economic status is well above the average of the Hispanic community. While it is true that such people need the ministry of the Gospel as much as any others, it should also be obvious to all who plan the future of Hispanic ministries within the Episcopal Church that such congregations will be able to make very limited inroads into the vast mass of poor Hispanics.

What this means is that, as we plan the future of Hispanic ministries, we must temper our understanding of the "challenge of numbers" with an awareness of the "challenge of the poor". The vast majority of the hundreds of thousands of Hispanics of whom we are speaking are poor. Unless the economic structures of our society, and the patterns of immigration, change radically, that will be the case for the foreseeable future. It is true that many do break out of the cycle of poverty. It may even be true that their participation in the life of the Church will enable some to accomplish that breakthrough. But still, as long as the Church seeks to minister to the Hispanic masses, it will be seeking to minister to poor people. To plan for a time when relatively small Hispanic congregations will be able to support themselves as white congregations do, is to plan for a time when they will cease to be poor congregations. And to plan for a time when they will cease to be poor congregations is to plan for a time when they will be increasingly distanced from the vast majority of the Hispanic community.

On the other hand, to plan for an ongoing Hispanic ministry is to plan for the development of congregations which, while being formed mostly by poor people, are able to focus their human and material resources on the needs of the poor in their own communities. In order to do this, only two options are open: one either plans for continued subsidies for an indefinite duration or for a permanent subsidy in the form of an endowment, or one plans and develops congregations whose material needs are within their own reach. Since the former solution encourages dependency, and is in itself dehumanizing and disempowering, it would seem that the best course is to plan Hispanic ministries and programs in such a way that the ongoing life of congregations requires as little subsidy as possible for as short a time as possible. Obviously, this does not mean that wealthier congregations and individuals could not then channel some of their resources through such Hispanic congregations. Such resources, rather than for the ongoing expenses of the congregation itself, should be clearly designated to further the congregation's ministry in the community, in coordination with the congregation's contribution and commitment to that ministry. By channeling such resources in this manner and for this purpose, continued dependence for the congregation's own inner budget will be discouraged, and the congregation will also be encouraged to see itself as a body of Christians in mission and service.

This in turn requires that clergy be trained and supported in ways that are consistent with their intended ministry. Since a significant part of this report will deal with the training of clergy for Hispanic ministries, I shall not presently dwell on that issue. On the other hand, the matter of clergy support deserves some attention.

Given the statistics quoted in an earlier section regarding the level of income of most Hispanics, it is not reasonable to expect that most congregations - and certainly not most poor congregations - will be able to support full-time clergy in the near future. This leaves the following options:

a) A full-time clergy serving individual congregations, and heavily and permanently subsidized by the diocese or by wealthier parishes.

b) A full-time clergy serving more than one congregation, and still subsidized for a significant number of years.

c) A part-time or fully non-stipendiary clergy supporting itself from its own secular work, perhaps with some contribution from the congregation or other outside funds.

d) A combination of (b) and (c), that is, a full-time priest serving several congregations with the help of other non-stipendiaries or part-time clergy, who may then become full-time as the need arises. Under this model, the full-time priest would still have to be subsidized for the foreseeable future. But, since a significant part of the pastoral and priestly work would be carried on by the non-stipendiaries or part-time clergy, congregations would not be entirely dependent on outside resources for such services.

It is possible that, due to different circumstances, all these models should be tried in various places and situations. It is even advisable that they be tried, in order to provide the necessary flexibility in planning. But it is important that those who plan them understand the consequences of one choice or another, and plan accordingly.

In conclusion, if the Hispanic Episcopal Church is to take seriously the "challenge of the poor", it must be ready to be not only a church for the poor, but also a poor church. This may be difficult in the midst of a denomination which is not among the poorest in the nation. But it may still be necessary.



### III

#### THE PRESENT STATE AND PROSPECTS OF HISPANIC MINISTRY IN THE GREATER NEW YORK AREA

While it is true that the Hispanic challenge is great, and that the Episcopal Church must do much more in order to meet that challenge, it is also true that the Episcopal Church has been working on this issue for some time, both in the United States and abroad, and that it has gained a measure of success that must not be ignored. In its earlier stages, the Episcopal Church sought to meet these challenges on the basis of those human resources that it had already developed in Latin America and the Caribbean. The time has now come, however, when, while continuing to draw on those resources, the greater New York metropolitan area must begin to produce and train its own leadership. The present section of this report will seek to characterize the work that has been done up to this point, and to show the extent to which it responds to the Hispanic challenge, as well as some of the points at which a change of course is required, mostly in the direction of additional training for those coming from overseas, and of the training and recruitment of Hispanics in the area of New York.

#### Latin American Episcopalians and Hispanic Ministry in the Greater New York Area

As the Episcopal Church in the greater metropolitan area of New York seeks to meet the challenges of Hispanic ministry, it is natural that it should look for resources to its sister churches in the countries of origin of most Hispanic Americans: Puerto Rico, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Central America. This has in fact been the case. Indeed, the vast majority of priests engaged in Hispanic work in the area are the product of Episcopal churches in the Ninth Province. Others were Protestants in those countries, or Roman Catholic priests in the same countries or in Spain. Still others - some doing very valuable work - are bilingual "Anglo" priests. Just now, as we shall see further on in this study, the first crop of Hispanic candidates for orders from the New York area is emerging.

The same is true, although to a lesser degree, of the congregations themselves. In several of them there is an important core - sometimes the majority - who have come to the United States as Episcopalians, or at least as Protestants of another denomination.

This being the case, it is important for the purposes of this study to have a general idea of the nature of the Episcopal Church in those countries of origin, for this will provide a clue both for the usefulness of resources from those countries, and for the dangers involved in their improper use.

In general, the Episcopal Church - as well as the entire Anglican Communion - refused to undertake any missionary work in Latin America during the nineteenth century, on the grounds that this was Roman Catholic territory. The one notable exception was the work undertaken in Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, with a base in the Malvinas/Falkland Islands, throughout most of the nineteenth century. This enterprise was justified on the grounds that the inhabitants of the area had never been reached by the Roman Catholic Church. But still in the twentieth century, when plans were being made for the International Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, the Anglican Communion insisted that missions to Latin America must be excluded from the agenda, since that was Roman Catholic territory.

The net result of this general stance was that the Anglican Communion had no plan or policy for Latin America. And yet, it found itself with churches throughout the continent. It may be helpful to review very briefly how such churches came about in the countries from which most Hispanics in New York have come.

There were Anglican services in Puerto Rico as early as 1598, when the British took San Juan and held it for five months. But the continuing work of the Anglican Communion in Puerto Rico dates from the late nineteenth century, after a revolution in Spain (1868) had resulted in a decree of religious tolerance. Two congregations gathered around a nucleus of expatriates, one in Ponce and the other in San Juan. After the Spanish-American War left the United States in possession of Puerto Rico, it was decided to relate these congregations to the Protestant Episcopal Church, and by 1902 the first missionary bishop was elected. But the greatest impetus for the numeric growth of the Episcopal Church in Puerto Rico came when the "Iglesia de Jesus" - the Church of Jesus - joined it. This had been founded in 1902 by a former chaplain in the American Army who settled in Quebrada Limon, near Ponce, and organized a church. When he joined the Episcopal Church, he brought with him more than two thousand members. At present, the strongest Episcopal churches in Puerto Rico are in the cities of San Juan and Ponce and their surrounding areas. Most of the membership - besides North Americans who tend to belong to the managerial class - is low to middle middle-class.

The Episcopal Church in Cuba was founded by Cuban Episcopalians returning from exile in Florida, late in the nineteenth century. As a result of the wars of independence, and the ensuing unrest, many Cubans had fled to Florida. There they became acquainted with Protestantism, and in particular with the Episcopal Church, which soon had several con-



gregations among them. Eventually some of these congregations began sending missionaries to Cuba, and these succeeded in founding the first church in 1884. All this was done with little thought or encouragement from the English-speaking hierarchy in Florida. It was the Spanish-American War that changed this situation, so that in 1901 the General Convention declared the Missionary District of Cuba to be officially constituted. It is significant that at that time the old argument about the propriety of Episcopal mission in Roman Catholic countries was revived, and that several of those who argued for the founding of the Missionary District did so on the basis of the assumption that Cuba, like Puerto Rico, would become a possession of the United States, and would therefore be part of a Protestant country. At first, the majority of the members were North American expatriates who were in Cuba for business or as part of the diplomatic corps. Around them gathered congregations whose Cuban members belonged generally to the lower echelons of management, or who were professionals and educators.

In the Dominican Republic, the Episcopal Church began in the nineteenth century, when a number of Episcopalians were attracted to that country by its very favorable policies intended to draw immigration. In 1898 they sent a request to Bishop Theodore Holly, the leader of a similar church in Haiti, that a priest be sent to them. Although this first priest was very much interested in work among the Spanish-speaking population, and began celebrating services in Spanish from the outset, he received very little support or encouragement from the wider church. At the time of the American intervention of 1916-24, the Protestant Episcopal Church showed more interest in the country. But even then its work centered on military and business personnel from the U.S. and little was done, not only among Spanish-speaking Dominicans, but also among the vast number of English-speaking West Indians of Anglican background who were settling in the country. Eventually this situation was corrected, and pastoral services were provided for such West Indians. It was among them and their descendents that the largest numeric growth took place. By 1957, the Episcopal Church in the Dominican Republic still had only one Dominican pastor. But in the sixties, with the founding of the Episcopal Seminary of the Caribbean, and then with the election of the first native bishop, the situation began to change. Still, thanks to its origins among English-speaking West Indians, the church in the Dominican Republic had significant work in some areas of the nation far removed from the capital city.

The same was generally true throughout Central America. There, the only missionary work that the Anglican Communion had planned was that among the Misquitos of the Caribbean coast. Here again, the reason why this was considered appropriate was that this was an area where Roman Catholicism had hardly penetrated. But eventually the Anglican Communion found itself providing pastoral services to the vast numbers of immigrants from the West Indies, and their descendents, who settled along the same

coast. To this day, the strength of the Episcopal Church throughout Central America and Panama is among the descendants of these West Indian settlers, who still carry English surnames, and many of whom still speak English. In several countries of Central America, there is significant - and often justified - distrust on the part of these people of West Indian descent towards the Spanish and Mestizo population who usually run the capital cities. Among the latter, the Episcopal Church has begun to make some inroads. But still the majority of its membership is concentrated on the Caribbean Coast and in Panama.

In Mexico, the Episcopal Church is the Protestant denomination with the longest history. Its roots go back to 1853, four years before Benito Juarez proclaimed freedom of worship. At that time, an Episcopal priest from the U.S. organized in the state of Chihuahua the Sociedad Apostolica Mexicana - Mexican Apostolic Society - whose liturgy was based on a Spanish translation of the Book of Common Prayer. A few years later, President Juarez, in his struggle against the Roman Catholic hierarchy, found it advisable to promote schism within the Roman Church. At that time, several Roman priests seceded from their communion, taking significant parts of their congregations with them. The president himself encouraged such actions by attending one of these schismatic churches. At the same time, through the influence of the Sociedad Apostolica Mexicana and others, these newly independent congregations gravitated towards the Anglican Communion, and requested help from the Episcopal Church. That help was sent by the bishop of New Orleans, and eventually an Iglesia de Jesus - Church of Jesus - was founded. Its first elected bishop, who died before being consecrated, was a former Dominican priest. In 1906, this church gave up its independence and became structurally part of the Protestant Episcopal Church. After very rapid growth in its earlier years - partly thanks to its connection with the memory of Juarez and the liberal goals he had espoused - that first vigor had been lost, and statistics of membership and number of congregations in the 1970's were similar to those of the 1870's. Again, the strength of the Episcopal Church in Mexico appears to be among the lower and middle echelons of the middle classes.

All of these churches are represented among Hispanic Episcopalians in the greater New York metropolitan area, as well as among priests serving in the area and in the national church. In such congregations, however, there is a disproportionate number of Cubans. The reasons for this are probably to be found in the nature of the Cuban migration to the United States, which took place during a relatively brief period and in very large numbers, mostly from the middle and higher classes. This meant that lay members as well as pastors went into exile at approximately the same time, thus keeping contacts that tend to be lost on migrations that are more long-drawn out. Also, since the Cuban wave of exiles arrived at the same time as the Episcopal Church in the United States was beginning to take cognizance of the Hispanic challenge, Cuban Episcopalians found support in their efforts to establish their own congregations, and Cuban priests found



placement at various levels. This has not happened without friction, for there are elements among other Hispanic Episcopalians who resent this disproportionate presence of Cubans, and some who feel that it may distort the nature of the mission among Hispanics in general. More than once has this consultant heard the phrase, "the Cuban captivity of the Church". On the other hand, while this is felt mostly at the clerical level, and while there are some congregations that are predominantly Cuban, this consultant has also found a number of Cubans working very well in the midst of congregations of more diverse Hispanic composition.

As one looks at this entire picture, there are several elements that should be taken into account in planning for mission among Hispanics in the greater New York metropolitan area:

First of all, the existence and availability of a number of Hispanic lay people and priests is a natural starting point in such planning. Among those resources, one should count not only those who are already in New York or in the United States, but also those who, no matter whether we like it or not, will continue to arrive. We may have questions about encouraging a drain of priests from the Ninth Province. But for all sorts of reasons this will continue to take place, even if the dioceses in New York make it a policy not to encourage it. Not to integrate them in the total planning for Hispanic ministries would be a serious mistake. They know both the language and the culture. They are steeped in the Anglican ethos. It will take a long time for the church in and around New York to develop a cadre with the same expertise and characteristics.

Secondly, however, it is important to realize that such human resources have their limitations, and that one of the most serious may be the understanding of ministry and mission that they bring with them. Many of the churches in Latin America from which these persons come began as what amounted to a chaplaincy service, and then incorporated in their midst those Spanish-speaking people who were rising to the same classes as the expatriates whom they originally served. Others are particularly strong among English-speaking elements of West Indian descent who are traditionally suspicious of their Spanish-speaking neighbors. This means that there are still in those churches many who conceive the mission of the church basically in terms of chaplaincy, or services to the faithful. For such people, it is difficult to work in a situation where there are very few faithful, and where the work must be a combination of evangelism and advocacy.

Thirdly, since Episcopalians in all the countries of origin in Latin America are a minute minority of the population, their laity and clergy have seldom had the opportunity to see themselves as advocates for the

poor. For instance, there was very little that a priest in Cuba, even before the Revolution, could do in order to change unjust laws, regulations or practices. In such circumstances, ministry is often limited to pastoral work with individuals, or to organizing and supporting institutions that may help people, such as schools, medical dispensaries, etc. Therefore, priests coming out of that background often find it difficult to practice and organize the sort of advocacy which minorities such as Hispanics need.

Fourthly, given the social composition of Episcopal churches in some of the countries of origin, many of these immigrant resources - both clergy and lay - may come from a class background that is higher than that of the majority of Hispanics in the greater New York area. This may be reinforced by some processes of selection, as has been the case with Cuban exiles. While it certainly is possible for people of higher classes to perform significant ministry among poorer people, this requires a conscious effort to overcome class prejudice. Immigrant priests and clergy are not always aware of the need to make that effort, or willing to make it. Among Hispanics, class and national prejudice often takes the form of being critical of the way others speak. In a place such as New York, where significant numbers of Hispanics speak Spanish with an admixture of English, class prejudice may take the form of linguistic purism. While priests and laity who share in such prejudice may not be aware of it, this is a great hindrance to their effectiveness as ministers among poorer or less schooled Hispanics.

Finally, the culture shock of the urban ghetto must not be underestimated. Most immigrants to New York come from much smaller communities - the one exception is Mexico City, which is larger than New York. While it is true that a knowledge of Spanish language and culture is important for ministry among Hispanics, it is also true that there is a ghetto culture whose knowledge is equally important. During the last few weeks, more than one Hispanic priest of Latin American origin have confessed to this consultant a great fear of moving about in their parishes. One in particular, whose bishop considers lazy, spoke of the contrast between his very effective ministry in his native country, and his failure here. He declared that he knew that he was failing because he was afraid to move about in the neighborhood. While he has the knowledge of the Hispanic language and culture, he remains alien in the barrio.

What all this means is that, while lay and clerical resources from sister churches of the Ninth Province and other areas of Latin America may be very helpful, and at present Hispanic ministry in New York is inconceivable without such resources, a plan must be developed for training such immigrant ministers in order to enable them to cross national and class lines, to understand their ministry as including advocacy in the midst of the community, and to introduce them to the practicalities of everyday life in the different culture of the barrio. This must be part of any comprehensive plan for Hispanic ministry in the greater New York metropolitan area.



## The Role of Anglo Bilingual Ministers

It must also be noted that a number of the most effective ministers among Hispanics in the area are and have been English-speaking whites who either were bilingual before beginning this ministry, or undertook to learn Spanish out of the conviction that they needed it. These are people who have learned to place mission before structure, and whose personality and training are flexible enough that, faced by a situation different than that for which they were trained, they simply took to the streets to find out what was needed - what the Gospel required in the situation where they were placed. Talking to members of their congregations, this consultant found little or no sense that they would rather have a Hispanic minister, although there is indeed the awareness that it is very difficult - perhaps impossible - for such a minister to attain a full understanding of Hispanic culture and traditions. While in theory all lay people interviewed felt that there is a need for priests who are Hispanic, practically all of them listed other characteristics that they would consider more desirable: commitment to the Gospel, collegial style of leadership, willingness and ability to move in the barrio, etc.

This means that, given the proper attitude, personality, and training, Anglo priests can function quite well within the Hispanic community. This is certainly not to deny the great advantages of having a greater number of Hispanic clergy. But it is to recognize the fact that for a long time the Episcopal Church will be able to respond to the Hispanic challenge only if it is willing and ready to use not only personnel from abroad or from the Hispanic barrios in New York, but also a substantial number of Anglo priests.

A factor to be considered in evaluating this last statement is the growth of the Hispanic population outside the geographical limits of this study. New York is not an isolated area surrounded by an iron curtain. At the same time that we are beginning to train more Hispanics for the priesthood in New York, the number of Hispanics in neighboring areas - Philadelphia, Boston, Baltimore, etc. - is growing. Soon those dioceses will begin to draw personnel not only from Latin America, as New York has done, but also from New York. Thus, it is likely that some of those Hispanics trained now and in the next few years in the greater New York area will continue their ministry in other sections of the country. If this is true, then the greater New York area - as well as most of the country - will have to count on Anglo priests to help it meet the Hispanic challenge.

Again, this is not simply a matter of finding a priest who happens to be bilingual, and placing him or her in a parish with a growing number of Hispanics. While this has been the pattern in the past, and there have been the admirable stories of success mentioned above, the casualty rate - both in priests and in congregations - has been inordi-

nately high. Therefore, just as in the case of priests coming from Latin America, Anglo priests who are to work in predominantly Hispanic areas in New York - indeed, soon anywhere in the city and its environs - will need special training for this particular form of ministry.

### The Need for Indigenous Leadership

The work that has been done with the human resources drawn from Latin America and the Caribbean, and with bilingual Anglo priests, is nothing short of stupendous. One of the bishops of the area who is firmly committed to new models for Hispanic ministry, after listing for over an hour all the various places in his diocese where there is Hispanic work, pointed out that in all but three of those places there was nothing in 1970, and correctly concluded that this is "a very credible record of growth". In fact, several bishops pointed out that it is among Hispanics that the membership of their dioceses is growing.

But this very growth must become a new point of departure. The growing maturity of the Hispanic churches in the area is precisely what is leading them both to ask for Hispanic priests and to offer candidates for orders from among their congregations. They are becoming increasingly aware that, while the ministers they have received from either Latin America or the Anglo church have done a good job, new ventures are required for which an indigenous clergy will be needed. But many among the laity, and particularly among those who are considering the call to the priesthood, who are aware of the challenges of the times, are also aware that traditional seminary education poses a number of difficulties.

Some of those difficulties are well-known to all who are engaged in theological education - the financial cost of a seminary education, the need to leave one's livelihood, sometimes at a fairly advanced age, the reluctance to return to "school" after years away from academic endeavors, etc. But other difficulties have to do with the specific nature of the ministry that is required among Hispanics in New York. Foremost among these is the question of the degree to which the traditional academic training offered in most seminaries really equips one for ministry in the barrio. This has to do both with cultural and with socio-economic issues. Most Hispanic members of congregations would feel out of place in our "best" seminaries in New York, not because they are intellectual institutions, but because they reflect a culture and a social class that is not theirs.

In conclusion, it would seem that, in order to provide an adequate response to the Hispanic challenge, it will be necessary for the Episcopal Church in the New York area to continue relying on leadership from three main sources: its own English-speaking constituency, the churches that have been founded in Latin America and the Caribbean as a



result of earlier missionary endeavors, and Hispanics coming up from congregations in the area. Each of these three groups requires a different sort of training - or re-training - and support in order to be able to be more effective in ministry in the barrio. The question then is, how can the existing educational institutions, and the diocesan and parish structures, provide for those various types of training and support?

#### IV

#### TRAINING FOR MINISTRY AND THE INSTITUTO PASTORAL HISPANO

When studying the recruitment, training, and continuing education of ministers, one may be expected to take the seminaries and their work as a starting point. There is good reason for this, for after all the seminaries have been established precisely for that purpose. But, as one looks at the record of the major Episcopal seminaries (as well as most others) in and around New York City, it is clear that they have traditionally done very little to respond to the Hispanic challenge. This is not to blame the seminaries alone for such shortcomings, since the dioceses that they serve, and the parishes in them, have also done very little to recruit Hispanic candidates or to build Hispanic congregations. Therefore, when speaking of existing Hispanic ministries, parishes, and training programs in the New York area, one is speaking of the exceptional rather than the normative. One must therefore begin with those exceptions that have attained a measure of success, and consider how they can or should affect the norm.

Following that methodology, it seems logical to look first at the one institution in the New York area whose main goal is the training of personnel for Hispanic ministry, the Instituto Pastoral Hispano. The Instituto, founded in the Diocese of Connecticut in 1977, and expanded into a regional institution in 1980, is now related to the dioceses of Connecticut, New York, Long Island, Newark and New Jersey.

While the main purpose of the Instituto Pastoral Hispano is to develop indigenous Hispanic ordained leadership, it also offers various programs for both clergy and laity (Hispanic as well as others).

In its efforts to raise the awareness of Anglo clergy and laity to the need for Hispanic ministries, and to train them to take part in such ministries, the Instituto has held a number of seminars on Hispanic language, culture, and ministry, both in local churches and in connection with General Theological Seminary. In so doing, it is seeking to help Anglos and others respond to the challenges described in sections I and II of this report. Indeed, if it is true that the United States is rapidly becoming a bilingual nation, and that, as John Naisbitt has indicated, fluency in Spanish will soon be necessary to function effectively in this society, it is apparent that the seminaries of all major denominations are doing very little in response to that challenge. In each of the major Episcopal seminaries visited recently by this consultant (Austin, General, Berkeley, and EDS) there



is a measure of awareness of this situation. In all of them the leadership speaks of the need to encourage students and faculty to learn Spanish, and in each of them there is a small group of students (and some faculty) who are taking that admonition seriously. But in none of the seminaries in the Northeast has this reached the level of serious curriculum revision, or a sustained effort at continuing education dealing with Hispanic issues. Therefore, even in this field the Instituto must be seen as a key piece in the total mission and educational strategy for the New York area. (Although this consultant did visit Austin Seminary as part of his study, this was by way of comparison rather than as an actual part of the study itself. Therefore, this is not the place to report on that visit. In brief, it is his impression that while Austin has paid more attention to the cultural aspects of the Hispanic challenge than any other Episcopal Seminary, it has not paid as much attention as has the Instituto to the economic and social issues raised by the presence and status of Hispanics in our society.)

It is, however, in the field of theological education with a view to pastoral and priestly ministry that the Instituto has spent its greatest effort, both in terms of financial and human resources and in terms of conceptualization of the task at hand.

The basic understanding that informs the work of the Instituto is a combination of some elements drawn from Roland Allen's understanding of mission and preparation for it, with others drawn from Latin American and other liberation theologies. The result is a view of theological education that is quite different from many of the traditional patterns.

First of all, the Instituto is very much aware that it is training candidates for a specific ministry. While there is a sense in which the catholicity of the church must be embodied in its ordained ministry, this does not mean that all ministers must be interchangeable. On the contrary, the Biblical teaching on the variety of gifts means that ministers are given gifts for certain sorts of ministry, and not for others. Therefore, if Hispanic language and culture are seen as a gift, those who partake of it are also given a specific ministry, and must be trained for it, rather than for a general, amorphous ministry.

The counterpart of that assertion may be one of the reasons for some of the resistance which this consultant has found to the work of the Instituto, for it implies that all theological education is training candidates for a specific ministry. "Mainline" institutions may fail to see this, because the specific ministry for which they are training people is among that segment of society that sets the norm for others, and that therefore has come to consider itself normative or general. But, if what has been said in the earlier sections of this

report is true, conditions are rapidly changing in such a way that this illusion will no longer be tenable.

Secondly, on the basis of the first assertion, the Instituto works on the assumption that the specific gifts which candidates bring are a great asset for their future ministry, one that must be appreciated and fostered. The way some of the leaders in the Instituto put it is that for most of their students "the wisdom they bring to ministry, and their reflections on the Gospel and its meaning for life, come more from this background of experience than from formal academic work. In our program, we have deliberately built on the strengths of this background in order to enrich and deepen their thought, rather than try to have them fit into a learning process which would ignore this history and be alien to them". The result, as this consultant has seen it, is a student body that includes the most disparate life experiences, and which somehow feels affirmed and unified in its diversity - immigrants, native U. S. citizens, and undocumented refugee, clown, social worker, travel agent, and New York Times correspondent. Indeed, in some thirty years of involvement in theological education at all levels and in various cultures, this consultant has never encountered a student body with such richness of life experience and actual missionary involvement.

Thirdly, the leaders of the Instituto are convinced that what they are offering their students is not a "second-class" theological education, and their students are even more convinced than they. It is important to understand the basis for such a claim, as well as the degree to which it is true or not, for one of the phrases most commonly heard by the Consultant in the course of the present study has been "second class priests" - a phrase used both by critics of the Instituto and by supporters seeking to respond to criticism.

The administration and the faculty at the Instituto are academically on a par with those of the average Episcopal seminary in the country. While only one or two members of the faculty are well-known scholars and authors, most others have academic credentials that would enable them to teach in residential seminaries elsewhere. Unfortunately, the Instituto has not been able to communicate this throughout the Episcopal constituency, for questions regarding the academic ability of the faculty have been raised repeatedly and without solid foundation.

Furthermore, the leaders of the Instituto are convinced that the theological education needed for Hispanic ministry, far from being inferior to that needed for more traditional ministry, must be superior. The reason for this is obvious. In more traditional ministry one has countless resources on which to draw. For generations on end Scripture has been interpreted in terms of the dominant culture, and the Anglican liturgy has been shaped by Anglo values and culture. While changing circumstances do require corrections in theology, biblical interpretation,



liturgy, pastoral practice, etc., these are still basically the result of an evolution from what was already there. And in any case Christians of that dominant culture are constantly producing resources for dealing with such changes. But what is needed in Hispanic ministries is much more than this. What is needed is to read Scripture anew, and to have the tools with which to hear a different word than what the standard commentaries say; to be able to shape the liturgy according to the needs of Hispanic culture and social conditions, without abandoning the catholic richness of the Book of Common Prayer; in short, to create a non-Anglo way of being Anglican. Such a task obviously demands, not less knowledge of Scripture, tradition, and theology, but more. And it also demands a deep knowledge of one's own culture and situation, both in terms of direct experience and in terms of social and economic analysis. What the Instituto proposes is not a lesser education for people of lesser capabilities, but a different education for people with a very different task. This may be too tall an order for the Instituto to fill. But if it does succeed, and some of its graduates show themselves capable of this sort of ministry, and some still call them "second class priests", this will be a reflection, not on the Instituto and its products, but on the Episcopal Church itself.

On the other hand, in seeking to fulfill this call, there are a number of dangers which the Instituto faces, and some of which it has avoided more successfully than others.

The first danger is what could be called the "intellectual shortcut". Since leading liberation theologians and leading professors at the Instituto are critical of traditional theology and of the way it has been taught, there is the danger that students will feel justified in ignoring such learning. After all, why learn a theology which one's professors criticize so thoroughly and cogently? What one tends to forget in such circumstances is that the reason why a particular professor or Latin American author can be so critical of this learning is that he or she masters it, and therefore can see both its flaws and its values. The student is then tempted to take the professor's or the author's conclusions without the hard work that has gone into them. This clearly undercuts the very educational philosophy that undergirds the Instituto. But still, it is a clear temptation, and one that not all students have avoided.

Several factors tend to encourage that attitude. One is the lack of connection of the Instituto with a more traditional seminary. There is an agreement with New York Theological Seminary whereby Episcopal students take a number of courses at NYTS (24 semester hours) and the Seminary grants them credit for an equal amount of work in the Instituto, at the end of which the Seminary grants them a M.P.S. (Master in Professional Studies). But NYTS is itself a unique institution with a tradition and philosophy of education in some ways similar to those of the Instituto, and with practically no library of its own. (NYTS has entered into an

agreement with General Theological Seminary which provides for cross-registration and the use by NYTS of the General library.) For a number of reasons, mostly inconsequential, most Instituto classes are held at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine of New York, or in other similar settings. Thus, students have very little opportunity to see an academic community at work, to work in a library, or even to have a glimpse of the vast expanse of what could be learned.

Another factor that tends to encourage an anti-intellectual attitude in students that has been mentioned above, is strengthened by the "contrast in directions" between the students and the leadership of the Instituto. While most of that leadership has been steeped in traditional academic disciplines, and is now in the process of returning from them to a more active involvement in the socio-economic struggles of the day, most students have not had that experience. Thus, what the faculty intends as criticism of a tradition they know, is sometimes heard by students as license to ignore that tradition, or the disciplines connected with its knowledge.

Thirdly, anti-intellectualism is fostered by the natural inclination to activism of the students whom the Instituto tends to recruit. The Instituto clearly wants students with missionary zeal, people who are eager to go into the community in the name of the Gospel - or, rather, people who are already there. Thus, the push for activism among the student body of the Instituto is much greater than in most traditional seminaries - and faculties in such seminaries are very much aware of the degree to which such activism can be used as a means to avoid hard intellectual work.

Finally, anti-intellectualism is fostered by some of the poor examples of so-called academic excellence that the students experience in some classes. While in general the students evaluate their courses as very helpful and exciting, there are some exceptions to that. Such exceptions tend to be courses taught by professors with high academic qualifications, who have been invited to teach because of those qualifications and because they are Hispanic, but who do not fully share the philosophy and ethos of the Instituto. In such cases, students complain of professors who are more interested in bringing an armload of books to class, or on showing how many languages they know, than they are in them, or in relating their discipline to the Hispanic situation in New York. Since those who are more in tune with the philosophy of the Instituto do not tend to boast of their academic prowess, the conclusion is that academic learning is a hindrance rather than a help to mission and ministry.

All the foregoing is not to say that anti-intellectualism has become the norm among students in the Instituto Pastoral Hispano. On the contrary, this consultant has had very interesting discussions on items such as Calvin's view of the state, or the meaning and significance of



the doctrine of the Trinity, with Instituto students. Through their dialogue among themselves and with their professors, through their reading, and through their involvement in crucial issues for the communities in which they live, these students keep intellectually alive and alert. But there is still a tendency to misunderstand or disregard the work that goes on in academic centers.

Another danger is that, since all or most of their theological education has taken place apart from other candidates for orders, the Instituto students and graduates will come to form a separate group, with very little connection with the rest of the clergy. That is quite natural, and every seminary has its alumni/ae association from which it draws significant support. But, when those who have followed a particular curriculum are distinct both in their culture and in the nature of the curriculum they have followed, that esprit de corps can also be very divisive. If the Episcopal Church is indeed to respond to the Hispanic challenge, this will imply the recruitment and training, not of a small core group such as the present student body of the Instituto, but of what will eventually become a sizeable portion of the Episcopal clergy in New York and environs. If all or most of the members of that clergy have been trained in almost total separation from the rest, the negative consequences of such circumstances are not difficult to foresee.

Another danger is that the task of thinking seriously about what the Hispanic presence and challenge implies be "delegated" - or, rather, "dumped" - on the Instituto and its staff and constituency, thus relieving other institutions from the need to deal with the issue. If Hispanic ministry becomes the responsibility of the Instituto, seminaries will be tempted to continue along their merry way, either oblivious of the Hispanic challenge or confident that it is someone else's responsibility. This would in turn mean that the vast majority of clergy trained in New York and Connecticut would continue to be trained with little cognizance of the degree to which they will have to deal with the Hispanic challenge in the future.

This consultant feels very strongly that, in order for the Instituto to fulfill its calling, and for it and the church to avoid these dangers, an important item on their agenda must be to find ways to link the Instituto with academic communities, so that students may be encouraged to acquire those skills without which they will not be able to create the new understandings and practices that are so necessary as the Episcopal Church faces the challenge of Hispanics.

## PATTERNS FOR THE FUTURE

As one looks at all the foregoing, it seems clear that there are two basic resources that must play central roles in the future mission of the Episcopal Church among Hispanics. One of these is the work already existing in the parishes. The other is the Instituto Pastoral Hispano, as well as other institutions dealing with training for ministry. It is also clear that in order to maximize the effectiveness of these two elements they must be employed in a variety of ways. Therefore, the suggestions and recommendations that follow do not seek to be exhaustive in the sense that they are intended to describe the ideal patterns and structure for Hispanic ministry in New York, but rather some options that ought to be explored.

The Instituto Pastoral Hispano and the seminaries of the church

While this consultant is convinced that there was ample reason for the founding of the Instituto apart from the existing seminaries, he is also convinced that the time has come when a closer relationship is necessary, both for the Instituto and for the seminaries. The Instituto, as has already been indicated, needs closer ties with the academic community. By such ties, it would gain readier access to library facilities, and more direct and lively dialogue with the traditional academic disciplines. The seminaries need the Instituto and its constituency as a means to make the Hispanic challenge a reality in their midst. Both need to be in constant relationship in order to avoid the danger of creating a separate (not necessarily "second class") clergy that would have little relationship with its colleagues, and eventually result in increased tension within the church.

This leads some to suggest that Instituto graduates should be required - or strongly urged - to spend a year at a residential seminary before being ordained. At least one bishop - who is also very committed to the Instituto and its goals - is pursuing this course of action with one of his students, and meeting some resistance on the part of the student. Without going into the details of this particular case, some general comments seem in order. First, there may be several reasons for such requirements. One reason may be the need to help the student in question relate with those who are to be his or her colleagues in future ministry, and to do so at the time of formation. This would be one way of attempting to forestall the possible tensions resulting from the different sort of formation offered by the Institute. Another reason may be a desire to have the student impact the rest of the student body and the



Seminary. Although this sounds like an excellent idea, in practice it would be hindered by the difficulty that an individual always has in impacting an institution - particularly if it happens to be a minority individual. Another reason may be to immerse the student in the Anglican ethos and life of common worship, of which the Instituto, due to its character, can provide little experience. Finally, a fourth reason may be to expose the student to the academic tradition in a way that may not have been possible at the Instituto.

While there is a measure of justification for all these reasons, it is doubtful that much can be accomplished by placing individual minority students in the context of an institution as large as General. A frequent complaint - often a reflection made after years of ministry - on the part of minority students who have attended predominantly white seminaries or other academic institutions is that they were excessively molded by the prevailing culture, and that it took them years to regain the freedom to think and act in terms of their own culture and traditions. This is understandable, for no matter how sympathetic professors and students may be to the struggles of minority students, if such students are isolated in a sea of another culture, they will soon begin to doubt their own insights, and to come to the (often subconscious) conclusion that if they perceive things differently this must be their own fault, and not that of the prevailing culture and ethos. Those who refuse to be molded, and insist on the value of their own insights, often come to reject the entire academic enterprise, or simply do the work required in order to obtain a degree, and then return to their old ways as if they had received little or no academic training.

There is a third option that Hispanic students ought to be encouraged to follow. This is to learn as much as possible of the theological and academic tradition, and at the same time to critique and correct it from the insights which they have as Hispanics and as people involved in ministry among the poor. But this is a very difficult option for individual students to follow. It requires a creativity and a stamina and self-assurance that few individuals have. For that reason, the best way to promote such a dialogue between the traditional academic disciplines and the challenge Hispanics may pose to it, is for Hispanics within an academic community to have a support system. That support system must include: (1) a number of other Hispanic students (there is a "critical mass" of about ten or twelve without which the entire enterprise is very difficult); (2) Hispanic and other faculty who understand their struggle and share in it; (3) library resources that connect them with others in other parts of the world, or in other times, who are going or have gone through similar struggles; and (4) a direct involvement in Hispanic parishes and communities that can be used to test the insights received at Seminary.

For these reasons, it is important that Hispanic students in institutions such as General Theological Seminary have the support system for Hispanics that can only be provided by an organization such as the Instituto Pastoral Hispano. Likewise, the Instituto needs resources such as those available through General Theological Seminary. Furthermore, the church needs Hispanic clergy who, while trained in ways that take into account the particularity of their intended ministry, are also trained in constant contact with those who are to be their colleagues.

Therefore, it is RECOMMENDED that the Instituto Pastoral Hispano and General Theological Seminary explore ways in which this can be accomplished. In order to do this, a joint commission from both institutions should be appointed, with a mandate indicating the urgency of the matter for both institutions as well as for the church at large. If at all possible, the goal of such commission, and of the ensuing negotiations, should be not only to promote greater collaboration between the two institutions, but rather to cement a structural relationship from which both will profit.

One possibility would be for the Instituto to be based at General Theological Seminary, as an autonomous part of it charged with the following specific tasks:

a) To keep the Hispanic reality and challenge constantly present before the entire Seminary community, so that it may be taken into account in all activities - including courses. This is of paramount importance, for throughout the foreseeable future the majority of Episcopal clergy will continue to be trained in institutions such as General, and it is precisely that clergy who will be forced to pay increasing attention to the Hispanic population within their parishes.

b) To help recruit and train Hispanic ministers. In so doing, it would make extensive use of the Seminary facilities and resources. A possible arrangement would be for students to enroll at General, and for the Instituto to offer them: additional courses on the Hispanic reality; "footnoting" courses in which the traditional academic disciplines are examined from a Hispanic perspective; a support system that affirms the validity of their experience. In its recruitment procedures, the Instituto should continue its present method, which has achieved such remarkable results. Rather than the usual method followed by established seminaries, the Instituto has recruited its students mostly by word of mouth, on the basis of a challenge to pastors, bishops, lay leaders, and other students, to look for people with the gifts for ministry, and to place this call before such people, even though it may seem to be an interruption in their careers and plans. The Instituto should not attempt to create leaders, but rather to find people with proven qualities of leadership, and place before them the challenge of ministry. In its having done so lies a great deal of the uniqueness and promise of the present group of students.



c) To provide means for the further training of priests coming to New York from Latin America, and needing an introduction to life in the barrio and to the political, economic, and religious realities of Hispanic New York. This could well be done through an "apprenticeship" period under the joint supervision of an experienced parish priest and the Instituto.

d) To provide continuing education, particularly on Hispanic-related issues, for each of the groups mentioned in "a" to "c" above. In this context, it is important to indicate the advisability that the Instituto pursue its own vocation and self-understanding to the point of creating a different sort of continuing education. This consultant has found that the Instituto is not only an educational institution, but also a support group for Hispanics involved in reflections that they would probably not pursue in isolation from each other. For that reason, it is important for the Instituto not to accept without question the traditional model, in which an educational institution offers a curriculum that lasts a number of years, certifies its students as able to do whatever they are being trained for, and then occasionally offers "refresher" courses. Given the nature of Hispanic ministry, the danger of isolation for those who are engaged in it, and the need for a support group to encourage further reflection and experimentation, perhaps the Instituto should underplay the idea of "graduates", and speak more of "members", some of whom are already ordained, and others in the earlier stages of their preparation for ordination.

e) To serve as a resource center for bishops, clergy, parishes, and others seeking advice on how to conduct Hispanic ministries.

f) To provide lay training opportunities, both for Hispanic laity on various issues, and for others on issues having to do with Hispanic ministries.

Within that relationship, General Theological Seminary would contribute to the Instituto, not only the academic resources mentioned repeatedly in this report, but also the opportunity for its students to become steeped in the ethos and liturgical tradition of the Anglican communion. As already indicated, while there may be much in the liturgy that has to be changed in order to be applicable to Hispanic ministries, those suggesting and conducting such changes must begin by having a firm grasp of that which they are changing, and of those values inherent in it that should be preserved.

It is further SUGGESTED that, as preliminary steps while the above-recommended commission continues its work, several steps towards closer relationships be taken. These could include:

a) Moving the classes - or a significant number of the classes -

of the Instituto to the premises of the Seminary.

b) For the Seminary to allow its students to take some courses at the Instituto for credit, and to encourage those students who are fluent in Spanish to make use of this opportunity.

c) For the Seminary to offer at least one course a term at a time that is convenient for Instituto students, who at present are mostly working during regular hours. For the Instituto to encourage its students to take such a course. For the Seminary and the Instituto faculty then to offer a "footnoting" experience, in which the Hispanic reality and experience is brought to bear on that course, in dialogue with the professor from General offering it. If, as appears likely, a significant portion of the Hispanic clergy will be non-stipendiary or part-time for the foreseeable future, it would be unrealistic to expect such candidates for ordination to attend classes at times that are feasible only for full-time students.

Finally, it is further RECOMMENDED that the Instituto open exploratory conversations with the administration and faculty of Berkeley Divinity School. While geographical considerations may preclude a relationship with that seminary similar to what has been suggested above with General, this consultant has found the Dean of Berkeley quite open to similar suggestions, and eager to provide his students with significant contact with the Hispanic experience. It is also RECOMMENDED that, should conversations with General Theological Seminary not come to fruition within a reasonable time, the Instituto and the leaders of the church in the metropolitan area seek with Berkeley a similar arrangement to what has been proposed above with reference to General. Obviously, geographical considerations would require some adjustments to that proposal. But such adjustments are not impossible, and could provide the impetus for serious reconsideration of some of the implied premises of theological education.

In order to implement the above recommendations, it is necessary for the Instituto to have both a solid financial footing and capable, committed leadership. For that reason, it is RECOMMENDED that the Board of the Instituto immediately consider the possibility of making the position of Director a full-time position, and that the budget be adjusted accordingly. Without a full-time Director, it is very difficult to see how the Instituto could hold its own in the negotiations with General Theological Seminary recommended above, or how it could fulfill its other duties of recruitment, continuing education, lay education, etc. In order to make this possible, it is further RECOMMENDED that the Board seek a three-year commitment for the dioceses and the parishes and individuals that have been supporting the Instituto. All this, however, must be seen as simply giving breathing room for the Instituto and its supporters to develop a permanent economic basis. Ideally, that basis should



be a combination of proceeds from an endowment, income from the 1% support program, contributions from wealthier congregations, support from the national church, and at least symbolic contributions from Hispanic parishes in the metropolitan area. Furthermore, if what has been said above is true, and the Instituto's presence is to be a significant contribution to the entire enterprise of General Theological Seminary, it is to be expected that its support will also come from the general funds of that institution. This is of primary importance, since if the Instituto is financed only on the basis of training Hispanics, and not on the basis of its contribution to the church at large and the seminary task specifically, it will remain marginal within the framework of the entire Seminary.

#### The Instituto Pastoral Hispano and the Ordination of Its Graduates

One of the main concerns of the faculty, administration and student body of the Instituto Pastoral Hispano is the eventual ordination of its graduates, and their placement in ministry. None of these students has enrolled in the Instituto for idle curiosity, nor even for personal or intellectual growth. They have enrolled because they are eager to participate in the ministry of the church, in one way or another. Some of them are hoping to become full-time priests. Others have jobs they cannot leave, or for other reasons - including theological reasons - would prefer to serve as non-stipendiary priests. Others would be open to part-time positions. But for almost all of them ordination and pastoral and priestly service is a goal.

On the basis of that concern, this consultant has explored the attitudes of bishops, congregations, and others toward the possible ordination of Instituto graduates. Most bishops, and all congregations consulted, affirmed that they saw no reason why such graduates could not be ordained and employed as priests. One of the bishops declared that he himself would favor their ordination, but then added that "I would have some difficulty with my Commission on Ministry". In some dioceses, the main objection raised was the question of the financial resources with which to pay such newly ordained priests. But in general, this consultant received the impression that, should the Instituto students prove themselves to be capable of ministry, there would be no objection to their ordination.

The point at which there is some debate on the part of ecclesiastical leaders - and much concern on the part of Instituto students and leaders - is the General Ordination Examination. To a degree, this concern among students is the normal fear of all students facing such exercises. Some Anglo leaders of the church insist that they must go this route in order to avoid being "second-class priests". Others declare that the nature of the Episcopal clergy is such that "once you are in, if you do a credible job, no one asks how you got in". This leads to

considerable disagreement as to whether or not to apply Canon Eight in this particular case.

This consultant, however, is of the opinion that any resolution of this issue that consists in simply obviating the need to take the GOEs would contradict some elements in the basic philosophy of the Instituto. The issue is not that Instituto students are to serve a specific sort of ministry among a particular people, over against the universal ministry of those who take the "General" Ordination Examinations. The issue is that the GOEs, precisely by claiming to be "general" and not seeing their own particularity, perpetuate the myths that make Hispanic and other minority ministries, as well as ministry among the poor, so difficult. The dominant culture is not normative. One could even suggest that, given God's preferential love for the poor, and the call of the church to be an embodiment of that love, it is the non-dominant cultures - the cultures of minorities and of poverty - that should be normative in the church. This means that the debate over the GOEs is much more significant than the mere question of whether or not Hispanic candidates for orders ought to take them. To not allow Hispanic students to take them on the basis of extraordinary circumstances, while perhaps a proper course of action in the immediate future, would imply that theirs is an "extraordinary" ministry, in contrast with the "normative" ministry of those who do take the standard examinations.

In order to deal with this situation, it is RECOMMENDED:

a) That those responsible for the decision to ordain Instituto graduates be willing, for the present, to consider the possibility of developing options other than the GOEs to evaluate a candidate's preparedness for ministry.

b) That these options be developed in consultation among bishops, Commissions on Ministry, and Instituto staff.

c) That the staff of the Instituto prepare a resolution to be presented before General Convention stating that, given the pluralism of cultures existing in this country, it is necessary to develop Ordination Examinations that reflect that pluralism, and panels of readers that understand and appreciate the perspective and contributions of various cultures. In the case of Hispanics, for instance, while candidates should still be expected to master the basic data, the main issue would be how well they can apply such learning to their particular ministry; and their exams should be read by those who are familiar with Hispanic culture and ministry in it. This resolution, while prepared under the leadership of the Instituto staff, should come to General Convention with as much support as possible from the seminaries, bishops, and Commissions on Ministry in the area.



The other question that arises when discussing the possible ordination of Instituto students is their placement. After a series of conversations with bishops and other leaders in the area, this consultant is convinced that ways will be found to place most of the present graduating class in positions of ministry - either full-time or part-time, or non-stipendiary. The challenge of Hispanics obviously requires a much greater number of potential priests and other workers than those currently enrolled in the Instituto. However, before engaging in further extensive recruitment, the Instituto - and its prospective students - needs an assurance that their gifts and training for ministry will be used by the church. For this reason, it is further RECOMMENDED that this study be circulated among bishops, Standing Committees, and Commissions on Ministry, with the request that they respond to its projections and recommendations (particularly those in the following sub-section), declaring whether they consider them feasible and advisable. It is on the basis of their response that further steps should be taken to recruit candidates for Hispanic ministry, and to expand the work of the Instituto as outlined above.

#### Patterns of Congregational Development

As stated at the beginning of the present section, the Episcopal Church in the New York area has two main resources with which to address the Hispanic challenge. One is the Instituto Pastoral Hispano. The other is the existing Hispanic congregations. It is only as those congregations - and other new ones - grow and develop that the Episcopal Church will be able to meet the challenge of providing pastoral and other services in the Hispanic community. For that reason, it is necessary to look at the existing patterns of congregational development, and to consider alternative patterns and ways in which the existing ones can be improved and strengthened.

The most common pattern of Hispanic congregational development, as stated elsewhere, has been for an English-speaking parish to expand its work by the addition of a Hispanic congregation. This has worked in some instances. But it has also failed in at least as many cases.

An alternative pattern has been the creation of an independent congregation, with outside financial support, which then rents its facilities from an existing English-speaking congregation (with the option, at least in theory, to rent a church building from another denomination or a store-front facility from its owner). A case where this model has been employed with significant promise of success is the South Bronx, where the clergy of several Episcopal churches have formed the South Bronx Episcopal Mission Association. With significant outside help, they have secured the services of a Hispanic priest and sister, who have in turn taken the lead in Hispanic ministry in the area.

This second pattern has the advantage of making the nascent Hispanic congregation independent of another congregation whose facilities it shares. This avoids the sort of tensions that in the past have destroyed many promising beginnings. It also tends to foster the independence and maturity of the Hispanic congregation(s).

There is, however, one difficulty that is still present in this model. While the new congregations are independent of a particular congregation whose building they use, they are not independent of large-scale outside financial resources. In this particular case, the project itself is clearly dependent on the continuing grants of Trinity Parish. The original proposal projected income from the new congregations, and hoped that this income would grow at such a rate that continued dependency on Trinity's or other outside grants would diminish. The proposal for the second year, more realistically, projected less income from the new congregations. The result was a much larger request to Trinity. While the work of the South Bronx Mission Association is very valuable, and merits the highest possible level of support from Trinity Parish and other sources, this experience confirms what was said above, that to plan for financially independent (or quasi-independent) Hispanic congregations on the same pattern as white congregations is to set for those congregations an unattainable goal. Furthermore, it forces those congregations to use a large part of their financial resources to make up for the projected progressive cuts in outside financial help. The net result is that these congregations do not see how their contributions, no matter how sacrificial, improve or expand the work of the church. This in turn undercuts giving, and postpones even further the day when the congregation will be truly independent.

All this would seem to suggest that a different approach is in order. This approach would be grounded on the following premises:

- 1) That in order to start new missionary work outside financial resources are usually required.
- 2) That the new congregations should have as few a priori economic expectations placed on them as possible. This includes the support of more full-time personnel, buildings, etc.
- 3) That as these congregations begin to feel their way into their own ministry in the community, most of their financial resources should go into response to that ministry - otherwise, their own impulse to give would be dampened.
- 4) That the provider(s) of outside financial aid should be aware of this policy and encourage it. And that they must be ready to continue the basic program support until such a time as the congregation comes to the realization that this too is part of its ministry.



5) That, if outside economic support is to be increased, this should be only for program areas in which the congregation itself is ready to make a substantial investment - either in funds or in commitment of personal time. (An example of this would be a home for the homeless, supported with the help of wealthier congregations, but staffed, either on a volunteer or semi-volunteer basis, by members of the poorer congregation, as is already happening in at least one case.)

In very concrete terms, this means that it will be necessary to make fuller use, not only of full-time priests, but also of part-time and non-stipendiary clergy. Since there is among the present crop of Instituto students a number who would be ready to do this kind of work, the time seems ripe to attempt a pattern of congregational development that could be roughly outlined as follows:

1) A small team of fully supported staff, whose support comes mostly from outside funding sources, and is guaranteed for a number of years (although, quite naturally, subject to yearly evaluation).

2) This full-time staff, with the aid of a non-stipendiary team of clergy, to perform and lead the work of Hispanic ministry in a relatively large area.

3) The goals of this work to be both the upbuilding of new congregations and the provision of services and advocacy for the Hispanic community at large.

4) Work centered not so much on bringing people to a central location, as on small groups scattered throughout the entire area, gathering regularly for worship, study and service, and periodically gathering also with other groups within the same parish. This method would be an adaptation of the "comunidades de base" that have become such an important part of the Latin American scene, and of the "cultos de barrio" through which other Protestant denominations attain a significant part of their growth.

5) The part-time and/or non-stipendiary clergy to be charged with pastoral and priestly services to these groups, under the supervision of the team as a whole.

6) Decisions regarding enlargement of the staff, the remunerated employment of non-stipendiaries etc., to be left to the emerging congregations - until such a time when they can support such increase in expenses either fully or substantially.

7) Wealthier congregations to be encouraged to contribute to this work, not by hiring additional personnel for the same area, but in one of two ways:

a) By providing the funds necessary for repeating the experiment in another area.

b) By providing the funds necessary for the emerging congregations to provide services to the community. In such a case, the emerging congregation should be expected to show its support for the project through its own contribution, be it in cash, in kind, or in volunteer time.

Given the present situation of various programs of Hispanic ministries in New York, it is RECOMMENDED that, should this suggested pattern of ministry be deemed advisable, the necessary explorations be made with a view to implementing this plan in the South Bronx, as a further development of the work of the South Bronx Hispanic Mission, and with the collaboration and support of the Diocese of New York and Trinity Parish.

It is further RECOMMENDED that, as this plan unfolds, the Instituto use this setting as an opportunity to increase the work of its students in supervised ministry.

As the collaboration between General Theological Seminary and the Instituto develops, it is also RECOMMENDED that students at General be placed under the supervision of Instituto graduates (including non-stipendiaries) in this setting. This would also be a way to discredit any notion of a "second class" clergy.

Finally, it is RECOMMENDED that the bishops and Hispanic Commissions of the various dioceses in the area study the possibility of initiating similar experiments in their respective dioceses.



## A FINAL WORD

Given the nature of this report, it has not been possible for this consultant to acknowledge at every step all that he as a person has learned from many of those with whom he met. From bishops who showed a genuine pastoral concern for sheep without shepherds, to a pastor in whose home I stayed and the depth of whose faith was refreshing, and a child who spoke words of unexpected wisdom, many have been an inspiration and a challenge.

But the greatest inspiration - and one that should not be lost in the midst of statistics, critiques, and recommendations - has been the work that is already taking place. Among the students and faculty at the Instituto, and in parishes and barrios, it is clear that one of the most exciting things that is happening in the Episcopal Church in New York is taking place in those small congregations that so seldom draw our attention. One of the bishops correctly pointed out that it is already there that the most significant growth is taking place in his diocese. And all this simply leads me to reiterate what has been the underlying assumption of this entire report: that Hispanic ministry may well be a source for the renewal of the entire church. So may it be!